

TELEGRAM

INCOMING AMERICAN EMBASSY PARIS

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Control: 2758

Recd: DEC 21 1961
2:06 PM

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FROM: BERLIN
NO : 863 DEC 21 12 NOON
ACTION DEPT PRITY 1223 INFO BONN 1084 PARIS 883 POLAD USAREUR
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PARIS FOR EMBASSY STOESSEL AND MCGUIRE

DECLASSIFIED
Authority State Dept. Subject Guidelines
By DWT NLE Date 2/28/03

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REF USAREUR'S SX-7500, AND BONN'S 188 and 209 to USCINCEUR

I have read with considerable interest instructions relating to possible uprisings along zonal border to include borders between East and West Berlin, and Bonn's observations thereon.

As guidance for Berlin Commandant I have no observations to make. However, situations in Berlin cannot be covered in detailed instructions from Washington, Paris and Heidelberg. The Berlin Commandant must be credited with sufficient intelligence to be able to consider these instructions for his guidance and not as detailed orders. I would see no point to giving advice and counsel in the face of such detailed instructions as valuable as they may be for guidance. However, we should never forget that direct responsibility rests on the man in charge on the spot and so limit his ability to operate as to destroy his responsibility. My comment, therefore, is specifically directed to this one point. The instructions should be for guidance of the Berlin Commandant who, within this framework, must be allowed to use proper judgment to meet the situations which may develop. If I am wrong then indeed we have established a new code of conduct for responsible political and military representatives in the field where emergency situations can develop faster than communications can permit control from distant headquarters. I believe this the most important message I have sent yet, and I ask for its most careful consideration. We must get away from any thought that emergency problem can wait for instructions from on high.

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LIGHTNER

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